

Lee applies his own brand of psychology—or does he?

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EITHER Wycombe Wanderers manager Brian Lee is the most honest soccer boss in the country, or he has hit on a new line in pre-match psychology.

"League clubs always underestimate amateur sides," says Lee, "and in that usually lies our main hope."

"But Peterborough will know just what to expect on Saturday."

For Peterborough know all about the Rothmans Isthmian League after being shaken to their Posh boots last season by Bishops Stortford.

Peterborough escaped with a 2-2 draw by the skin of their teeth in the second round at Stortford last season, before winning the replay.

"So bang goes our chief weapon," muses Lee.

"Peterborough are top of the Fourth Division and any club at the top of any league plays with that extra confidence."

"They also have a great tra-

dition of Cup runs—and, after all, that's what got them into the League.

"And they have a First Division manager in Noel Cantwell. He learned a lot at Coventry, and this is showing itself at Peterborough."

"I was up there the other week and they announced over the loudspeaker that Billy Hales was watching Wycombe, and that they had twelve scouts watching matches for possible signings."

"I ask you, announcing all that to the fans. They run a public relations exercise that should be the envy of most of the 91 other League clubs."

"And, in fact, on that day, they had hired a generator—the only League club to do so."

Then he reeled off a list of crippling injuries, which have made Wycombe's team selection a formality with the only players left available.

England player Derek Gamblin and Ian Randall are both certainly out with injuries and

Michael Plummer talks to the manager of Wycombe

England striker Keith Searle comes out of hospital on Friday. Added to that Robb Williams is also ruled out and Welsh international Dylan Evans is recovering from a leg injury and is rated doubtful.

Lee completes his tale of woe: "We have had to restrict training sessions because of the floodlight ban, we've had no midweek matches and even petrol in the players' tanks is running low."

In fact, it's a wonder he has a team at all, as in the last three years, eight players have left to join the professional ranks.

These include Viv Busby to Luton (now Fulham), Peter Suddaby to Blackpool, Paul Fuchillo to Blackpool, Micky

Mellows to Portsmouth, Kenny Swain to Chelsea and John Delaney to Bournemouth.

But Loakes Park proves to be a magnet for top amateur players, and the club has managed to stay in the forefront of amateur soccer.

Nevertheless, it hardly seems worthwhile Wycombe taking the park on Saturday.

But if that were the case, an estimated 12-15,000 fans wouldn't be going to watch.

Wycombe have waited 41 years to draw a League club at home in the Cup. Now they have Newport and Peterborough in successive rounds, they won't go down without a tremendous battle.

Chairman Jack Smethurst reckons that the close-knit "family" atmosphere at Wycombe could pay dividends.

"Our lads run for each other and work for each other. It was this that beat Newport, and given an early goal and with that crowd behind us, we could do it to Peterborough."

"We foster this club spirit, and in the last two years have taken the players on tours to Greece and Yugoslavia. And this year we are thinking in terms of Cyprus."

"One thing Peterborough can be sure of—we will not resort to anything other than attacking football. We have not had a player booked or sent off this season—and we just couldn't play that way."

One supporter Wycombe will certainly have in the stands is Raymond Glendenning. He saw the Newport match and described it as the best game of football he had seen in years.

"I wish I had been commenting on that one," he told club officials.

Meanwhile, at Peterborough, Noel Cantwell is too old a hand to think it will be so easy. But perhaps Brian Lee has sown that seed of doubt in his mind.

The bluster of Clough, Allison and co. is a natural pre-match move. But this!